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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 002600

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, EAP/BCLTV

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [ECIN](#) [TH](#) [ASEAN](#)

SUBJECT: THAILAND: EAST ASIA SUMMIT - THAI IMPRESSIONS

REF: STATE 65630

Classified By: Political Counselor Robert J. Clarke. Reason 1.4(d)

1. (C) On April 12, Poloff discussed reftel questions and passed reftel points to MFA official Buskorn Prugsapongse, Director of the Economic and Policy Division, Department of ASEAN Affairs. Buskorn's comments echoed many of those provided by the Singapore Embassy in Washington, as reported in reftel. Buskorn said that Thailand views the East Asia Summit (EAS) as part of a "long-term vision to create a East Asian Community." Her impression is that the EAS will have a broad focus on large strategic issues, while ASEAN plus 3 would have an agenda focused on more narrow cooperative items. Buskorn would not comment on the substantive agenda or expected outcome of the EAS, claiming she had not yet received a readout from the ASEAN Foreign Ministers meeting in Cebu where EAS modalities are being discussed. Buskorn said the RTG understands that the U.S. is concerned that the EAS might divert attention from other regional structures. However, she believes that the EAS will actually complement APEC and ARF since those fora do not fully cover all of the region's strategic issues. She said the RTG wants the EAS to be as inclusive as possible, but would go along with the ASEAN consensus when considering the organization's membership.

BOYCE